

# 2012

## Governor's Environmental Stewardship Award Winners



## EXCELLENCE IN BUILDING GREEN

### **Habitat for Humanity of Greater Memphis Sustainable Building Program Shelby County**

Habitat for Humanity of Greater Memphis is the top builder of single-family, EcoBUILD-certified homes in Shelby County. These homes are 33 percent more energy efficient, use 30 percent less lumber, and generate 75 percent less construction waste than traditional homes. Sustainable features include Energy Star windows, appliances, lighting and ceiling fans; low-flow toilets, faucets and shower heads; recycled drywall and carpet; brick and cement-fiber board siding; OSB sheathing and house wrap; radiant roof decking; and low-VOC paints and coatings. The Habitat homes are sold at no profit, with zero-interest mortgages to qualified homebuyers who earn at or below 80 percent of the area median income. These projects created an infusion of nearly \$3 million into the local economy during 2011, providing steady employment to workers in the hard-hit construction industry, while making affordable home ownership possible for 44 low-income families.

## EXCELLENCE IN ENERGY AND RENEWABLE RESOURCES

### **TREEDC Leadership Knox County**

The Tennessee Renewable Energy and Economic Development Council (TREEDC) demonstrated exceptional leadership by partnering with 75 cities and counties to facilitate the advancement of renewable energy and energy efficiency in Tennessee. TREEDC provided assistance to several small communities with solar and biodiesel development, and promoted TVA's Green Power Switch Program. TREEDC hosted six free clean energy forums across the state, educating over 500 citizens about the environmental and economic benefits of renewable energy. TREEDC's outreach efforts extended to private businesses, local governments, farmers, energy and service providers, resource agencies and universities.

## EXCELLENCE IN ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

### **Duck River Watershed Education and Action Project Marshall County**

The Duck River Watershed Education and Action Project is an experiential curriculum designed to educate and engage students and citizens about watershed issues, the value of parks and recreation, and how today's youth can positively impact communities. A collaborative effort between the Friends of Henry Horton State Park and the Tennessee Environmental Council, the project involved both hands-on biodiversity training, as well as opportunities to better understand our role as active citizens to better the environment, economy and quality of life. Over 130 Marshall County fifth grade students participated in the project in 2011. Tasks included stream-bank observation and collecting samples from the Duck River. Students then analyzed the data, formed conclusions, and proposed and implemented actions to enhance streamside habitat, including planting trees to increase the riparian buffer.

## **EXCELLENCE IN ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION AND OUTREACH - SCHOOLS**

### **TIGUrS Urban Garden Shelby County**

The University of Memphis' Tigers Initiative for Gardening in Urban Settings (TIGUrS) educates students, staff, faculty and the community at large about responsible, affordable environmental stewardship through proven urban agriculture methods. The project serves as a premier setting for learning sustainable agriculture and also provides participants with organically grown food at no cost. The TIGUrS program is a model for sustainable urban agriculture that benefits both the environment and economy with each community participant. The program imparts direct, hands-on experience with soil reclamation and improvement, organic pest and disease management, and environmentally-conscious structure, design and usage. The TIGUrS program is the first and only student-grant funded program of its kind offered at no cost and without restriction by a state university in Tennessee.

## EXCELLENCE IN LAND USE

### **Cherry Farms Conservation Project Lauderdale County**

Cherry Farms in Lauderdale County installed a comprehensive array of environmental best management practices that addressed water quality, soil erosion, and plant and animal productivity and health. Many of these efforts were designed to reduce the impacts of cattle access, manure runoff and erosion to Cold Creek, which is listed by the state as an impaired stream. The project included 2,155 feet of exclusion fencing, 3,347 feet of cross fencing, 11,700 square feet of heavy use area, one water well, 2,700 feet of pipeline, eight cattle-watering facilities, one water and sediment control basin, 10 grade control structures, and 300 acres of nutrient management. These measures resulted in a 96 percent decrease in E.coli counts from water samples taken in Cold Creek downstream from Cherry Farms, as well as increased cattle productivity and health due to more efficient and higher quality grazing and watering systems.

## EXCELLENCE IN MATERIALS MANAGEMENT

### **Cumberland County's "Friendly Glass"** **Cumberland County**

To address the unique management challenges posed by glass bottles, the Cumberland County Solid Waste Department purchased the Andela Glass Pulverizer, a machine that crushes glass into a fine sand-like substance. This innovative system facilitates landfill diversion of glass bottles, and also creates a marketable product with many beneficial uses, including landscaping, road maintenance, feedstock for manufacturing new glass products, and others. In the first six months of use, Cumberland County has more than doubled the rate of glass recycling, and saved thousands of dollars in tipping fees. The savings in landfill disposal costs, along with the revenue generated by the sale of the product, is projected to provide a return on the original \$100,000 investment in less than two years.

## EXCELLENCE IN NATURAL HERITAGE

### **Athens Community Initiatives to Restore and Protect Our Natural Heritage McMinn County**

The city of Athens Wetland/Rain Garden Demonstration project began as a restoration of 5.3 acres of wetlands on the Oostanuala Creek, the location of the city's E. G. Fisher Public Library. This effort served as a springboard for several other projects and locations throughout the city, including pervious amphitheaters and picnic areas, bio-retention areas, community vegetable gardens and orchards, rain gardens, sink hole buffers, the restoration of a limestone glade, and native plantings. The demonstrations also provide unique educational opportunities for both current residents and future generations. Tours of the various project features are given to educate the public about how wetlands improve water quality, the importance of endangered cedar glades, our relationship to native trees and plants, and other environmental topics. This was all accomplished by a community of only 15,000 people, with the help of numerous grants, donations and partnerships, and more than 600 volunteers.



## EXCELLENCE IN SUSTAINABLE PERFORMANCE

### **Food City Energy Conservation Objective Statewide**

Food City, headquartered in Abingdon, Virginia, exemplifies superior leadership for a more sustainable future. Operating 62 stores in Tennessee, Food City is incorporating environmental initiatives on multiple fronts including recycling, energy savings, and chemical and waste reduction. Food City is very active in the community and has a history for demonstrating their commitment to local charitable organizations, promoting social sustainability via financial support of schools, the NuVal healthy food rating system, and providing associate health screenings at each location. Food City also contributes to the state's economic vitality and supports local farmers by purchasing and marketing local products. Food City won the Progressive Grocer / Green Grocer Award for 2011 for its ECO-friendly design at the company's Morristown, Tenn. location.

## **PURSUIT OF EXCELLENCE**

### **BlueCross BlueShield of Tennessee Going Gold Twice in the Pursuit of Excellence Hamilton County**

BlueCross BlueShield of Tennessee received the Governor's Environmental Stewardship Award in 2010 for its 950,000 square-foot Cameron Hill campus, the state's largest LEED Gold-certified project to date. In 2011, BlueCross completed renovation of the 180,000 square foot Gateway Building, an existing four-story structure originally built in 1965, again earning LEED Gold. Highlights include a 198.24 kilowatt solar array; state-of-the-art water control utilizing natural storm water filters to remove pollutants; and reuse of 96 percent of the building's existing walls, floors and roof. Additionally, BlueCross BlueShield's enterprise-wide paperless drive, daily recycling efforts, telecommuting program, hybrid shuttle service, and use of green cleaning and green pest control services have made a positive impact on the health of the environment and, in turn, the quality of life for Tennesseans.

## PURSUIT OF EXCELLENCE

### **The Bear Trace at Harrison Bay State Park Environmental Partnership Initiative Hamilton County**

The Bear Trace at Harrison Bay State Park is an 18-hole Jack Nicklaus signature golf course located near downtown Chattanooga. Its Environmental Partnership Initiative combines multiple programs and projects aimed at improving and preserving wildlife habitat, reducing the impact on natural resources, protecting waterways on and around the golf course, and educating the public on environmental conservation and stewardship issues. The Harrison Bay Eagle Cam Project, which captures the activities of two bald eagles nesting at the golf course, provides visitors an opportunity view nature up close. The Bear Trace at Harrison Bay has been certified as both an Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary and as a Groundwater Guardian Green Site. The Bear Trace at Harrison Bay continues to balance the needs of golfers with the needs of the wildlife which call Harrison Bay home in an environmentally sustainable manner.

### Gary W. Barrigar

Gary W. Barrigar has contributed a lifetime of exemplary service to the protection and stewardship of Tennessee's environmental heritage. Gary imparted the value and importance of the natural world to thousands of students, parents, administrators, organizations and groups throughout his 40 year career as an award-winning science teacher by using nature as a classroom, and integrating environmental education into the curriculum of every subject taught. In 2000 he was selected to chair the Tennessee State Board of Education Science Standards Committee that developed standards for high school courses in Ecology and Environmental Science that remain in use to this day. Gary has served as the president of the Boone Watershed Partnership from 2005-2012, where he grew the partnership from a loosely organized group to a highly effective 501(c)(3) organization that works to identify and address water resource issues in the Boone Watershed. He has also served in leadership roles in numerous other environmental and conservation groups, including the Southern Appalachian Highland Conservancy, Friends of Roan Mountain, Buffalo Creek Watershed Alliance, and the Overmountain Chapter of Trout Unlimited. Gary and his wife Nancy have also led the "Peacemaking Committee" at First Presbyterian Church in Elizabethton, a group that involves church members in a variety of projects and activities focused on improving our natural environment, for over 20 years.